

Press Release
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U.S. Embassy, Georgetown



A Test of our Resolve
Haiti Donors Conference
Chargé d'Affaires Ms. Karen L. Williams

35 seconds. That's how long the earthquake of January 12 shook the nation of Haiti. In the hours after the January 12th earthquake that struck Haiti, the international community mobilized to help Haiti. More than 140 nations were involved in the immediate rescue and response effort. Nations with close and those with strained relationships worked side-by-side united by common humanity. The response epitomized that while our citizenship is defined by the country in which we live, we all are part of a larger community of global citizens that aid others in need. On Wednesday, March 31, at the United Nations, more than 110 countries will come together again in support of the people of Haiti. We will hear the Government of Haiti's vision for its nation's future and its plan to make that future a reality.

The goal of the conference is to secure the foundation for Haiti's recovery and reconstruction through pledges from all sources—public, private, non-governmental and multilateral institutions. Supporting Haiti's efforts to build back better will not be a short-term endeavor. The Post-Disaster Needs Assessment, an analysis led by the United Nations and the World Bank, projected that it will take many years and \$11.5 billion to rebuild Haiti. At the Conference, pledges totaling \$3.8 billion will be called for to support rebuilding efforts for the next two years. These resources are required to lay the foundation for a stable and prosperous Haiti. The international commitment to Haiti must go beyond the emergency response, rather nations must commit to working with the people and Government of Haiti for the long-term to support their efforts to rebuild a nation and make it one that is worthy of its people. One with a vibrant private sector, rebuilt and strengthened public ministries, and a government and international community that will hold itself accountable to the people of Haiti.

The Government of Haiti and its international partners have committed to be guided by six principles set forth by at the ministerial conference in Montreal shortly after the earthquake. They are: Haitian ownership of the plan for the country's future; inclusiveness of all stakeholders, most importantly the Haitian people, during the rebuilding and beyond; accountability and transparency by the Government of Haiti and its donor partners first and foremost to the people of Haiti, but also the international

community; coordination between and among the Government of Haiti and donors; commitment to the effectiveness of investments by measuring the improvements our investments make in the lives of Haitians; and sustainability of our investment through an enduring commitment to work with the people and the Government of Haiti to grow capacity enabling the transfer of operations from donors to them.

Looking to the future and rebuilding does not mean that we can ignore the challenges of the present. We will continue to work with the Government of Haiti to address urgent humanitarian needs. We know that any prosperous tomorrow will depend on providing vital assistance today to those whose lives have been affected by the earthquake—those who lost homes, for whom food is scarce, and who have inadequate access to sanitation.

Over the course of the past two and a half months, we have all seen images of Haiti. There have been images of despair and suffering, but also of resolve, resilience and joy of life on the part of the Haitian people. We must not let the efforts in Haiti fade with the media coverage. Regardless of whether you own a company, go to school, or work for a government, you can help convey the message of hope that is present in Haiti and the vision that the Government of Haiti will present to rebuild a nation and translate that hope into reality.

As Secretary Clinton said before the earthquake: “For some of us, Haiti is a neighbor, and for others of us, it is a place of historic and cultural ties. But for all of us, it is now a test of resolve and commitment.”